

Stakeholder Perceptions and Engagement on Child Rights Protection in Uganda. A Study of Mityana Municipality



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ABSTRACT: This study investigates the effects of stakeholder perceptions and engagement on child rights protection in Mityana Municipality, Uganda. Grounded in a pragmatic philosophy, a mixed-methods approach was employed, involving both quantitative and qualitative data collection from a sample of 133 respondents drawn from a target population of 200. Findings reveal a strong positive correlation (Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.986) between stakeholder engagement and the effectiveness of child rights protection initiatives. While stakeholders recognize the importance of child rights, significant concerns emerged regarding the empowerment of parents and the collaboration among various stakeholders, which were rated as poor. The regression analysis indicates that approximately 97.1% of the variance in child rights protection can be explained by stakeholder perceptions and engagement, emphasizing the critical role of active involvement in improving outcomes. The study concludes that enhancing stakeholder engagement and addressing gaps in parental empowerment and collaboration are essential steps for effective child rights protection in Mityana Municipality.

KEYWORDS: Stakeholder perceptions, child rights protection, Mityana Municipality, community engagement, Uganda.

INTRODUCTION

The protection of child rights has emerged as a critical global concern, with various international frameworks established to safeguard the welfare of children. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), adopted in 1989, serves as a cornerstone for child rights protection globally, emphasizing the need for states to ensure the survival, development, and protection of children (UNICEF, 2021). This global commitment has fostered a growing awareness of children's rights and the responsibilities of stakeholders in various sectors to uphold these rights.

In Europe, child rights protection has been integrated into national policies and practices, with the European Union (EU) promoting child welfare through various directives and initiatives. The EU's Agenda for the Rights of the Child aims to enhance the protection of children's rights across member states, focusing on issues such as child poverty, violence against children, and the need for inclusive education (European Commission, 2021). These efforts reflect a broader recognition of the importance of stakeholder engagement in promoting and protecting child rights.

In Africa, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) provides a regional framework for child rights protection, emphasizing the need for states to take appropriate measures to ensure the rights of children are respected and fulfilled (African Union, 1990). Despite these frameworks, many African countries face significant challenges in implementing child rights protections due to socio-economic factors, political instability, and inadequate resources. Stakeholder perceptions and engagement are crucial in addressing these challenges and enhancing the effectiveness of child rights protection initiatives.

In East Africa, the situation is similarly complex. Countries in this region have made strides in recognizing and promoting child rights, yet they continue to grapple with issues such as child labor, trafficking, and access to education. The involvement of various stakeholders, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community members, is essential for creating a supportive environment for children's rights (Save the Children, 2020). Engaging these stakeholders can lead to more effective policies and practices that address the unique challenges faced by children in the region.

In Uganda, particularly in Mityana District, the protection of child rights is a pressing issue. The district has witnessed various initiatives aimed at improving child welfare, yet challenges remain, including poverty, limited access to education, and inadequate healthcare services. Stakeholder perceptions and engagement play a vital role in shaping the effectiveness of these initiatives. Understanding how different stakeholders perceive their roles and responsibilities in child rights protection can provide valuable insights into improving outcomes for children in Mityana (UNICEF Uganda, 2022).

This study aims to explore the effects of stakeholder perceptions and engagement on child rights protection in Mityana Municipality, contributing to the broader discourse on child welfare and rights in Uganda and beyond.

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Statement of the problem

Despite the global commitment to child rights protection, significant challenges persist in Mityana Municipality, Uganda, where the implementation of child rights legislation remains inadequate. According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2021), approximately 28% of children in Uganda experience some form of violence, while 23% are engaged in child labor (UBOS, 2021). In Mityana District specifically, local reports indicate that only 45% of children have access to basic education, and many are subjected to various forms of abuse and neglect (Mityana District Local Government, 2022).

The lack of effective stakeholder engagement exacerbates these issues, as many community members, including parents, local leaders, and NGOs, often lack awareness of their roles and responsibilities in protecting children's rights. A study by Save the Children (2020) highlighted that insufficient collaboration among stakeholders has hindered the development and implementation of effective child protection policies, resulting in fragmented efforts that fail to address the root causes of child vulnerability.

Moreover, the perceptions of stakeholders regarding child rights and their engagement levels vary significantly, leading to inconsistencies in the approaches taken to safeguard children. For instance, a recent survey indicated that only 30% of local leaders in Mityana felt adequately trained to handle child rights issues, which directly impacts the effectiveness of child protection initiatives (UNICEF Uganda, 2022).

This study intends to bridge the gap in understanding the effects of stakeholder perceptions and engagement on child rights protection in Mityana Municipality. By examining the perspectives of various stakeholders, including government officials, community leaders, and NGOs, the research aims to identify barriers to effective engagement and propose strategies to enhance collaboration. Ultimately, this study seeks to contribute to improved child rights outcomes in Mityana, fostering a community that actively protects and promotes the welfare of its children.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical review

Legal Positivism

Legal positivism views law as commands sanctioned by a sovereign power like the state. It emphasizes the judiciary's role in adhering strictly to enacted legislation and established precedents. However, this approach risks ignoring universal moral obligations to protect inherently vulnerable groups such as children. It also limits judicial creativity in remedying gaps or deficiencies in laws relating to emerging issues affecting children's rights (Shaw, 2013).

Natural Law Theory

Natural law theory holds that just laws are those that embody objective moral truths that exist independently of what is legislatively enacted. From this perspective, children's rights are innate moral entitlements and judges have a duty to uphold these higher principles of justice, not merely enforce positive laws. However, determining universal natural laws is challenging and can permit ambiguity, affecting consistent application (Hurd, 2000).

Legal Pluralism

Legal pluralism recognizes that alongside the formal state system, informal customary and religious norms also regulate communities and their legal practices. It positions the judiciary to carefully balance compliance with enacted laws and consideration of non-state orders influencing children's lives (Merry, 2017). This flexibility could enhance accommodation of diverse cultural concerns relating to children. However, allowing overly broad consideration of uncodified norms risks compromising core universal children's rights standards.

In my view, legal pluralism provides the best framework for understanding the judiciary's role. It acknowledges the reality of multi-layered regulatory systems while emphasizing adherence to overarching international children's rights principles. This balanced approach equips judges to proactively protect children's interests while demonstrating cultural sensitivity in their judicial function.

Related literature

Stakeholder perceptions and engagement on promotion and child rights protection

A study in Nigeria examined survey responses from 300 parents, community leaders, and social workers (Ekeopara & Akpan, 2021). It found that stakeholders who believed children deserve a voice in decisions affecting them and should be protected from hazards demonstrated more supportive attitudes toward policies strengthening children's access to education, healthcare, and legal aid. Educational initiatives in the communities aimed to shift remaining unsupportive perceptions.

Research in Kenya administered interviews and focus groups with government officials, religious figures, and parents from 30 counties (Jacob et al., 2020). Those perceiving children's rights as restricting parental authority or clashing with cultural/religious traditions expressed less support for laws against child marriage and corporal punishment. However, after engaging with local child advocates to clarify compatible interpretations, support among previously hesitant stakeholders increased considerably.

A mixed-methods study in Ghana involved questionnaires and discussions with district chiefs, assembly members, and community volunteers (Akuffo et al., 2019). Findings showed stakeholders believing children experience vulnerability deserving protection

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expressed most willingness to collaborate with agencies advancing policy reforms involving local participation structures to uphold children's welfare and development. Engagement helped correct misperceptions straining some working relationships.

In Nepal, researchers conducted key informant interviews and workshop dialogues with family court judges, police investigators, and parent-teacher association leaders (Dhakal et al., 2018). Changing pre-conceptions of certain stakeholders, especially among elders initially viewing rights as a foreign imposition, strengthened coordinated implementation of new protections for children from child labor, sexual exploitation, and harsh discipline.

Cross-national Afrobarometer surveys and focus groups in 20 countries associated higher public support for investing in children's well-being with more inclusive representative forums enabling diverse perspectives on balancing communal, individualistic and universal principles of children's status within societies and under law (Roberts et al., 2015). Open exchange mitigated viewpoints hindering consensus.

A longitudinal study in Indonesia tracked the impact of workshops bringing together children, parents, religious leaders and local government over 3 years in 10 districts (Salim et al., 2017). Regular engagement transformed previously polarized or passive stances into collaborative problem-solving on issues like birth registration, access to justice and reporting abuse. Multisector youth forums have since been established and integrated into district planning.

Research in Tanzania interviewed 150 community paralegals, teachers and health workers serving on 40 Child Protection Committees before and after training (Mashali et al., 2018). Additional sensitization addressing misgivings around modernizing customary practices and allocating resources strengthened understanding of promoting best interests through cooperative solutions. This enhanced committees' effectiveness in coordinating cases according to rights-based approaches.

A mixed-methods evaluation in Somalia assessed perception changes among 500 traditional elders, migrants and civil society activists after workshops combining Sharia, civic education and children's participation (Fuller et al., 2019). Dialogue bridged divides on issues like guardianship, discrimination and rehabilitation. Regional children's councils have since formed to represent diverse voices and sustain reformed perspectives through local problem-solving.

In Bangladesh, surveys and focus groups involving teachers, imams and village leaders before and after rights awareness campaigns showed altered views correlated with increased cooperation on birth registration drives, school inspections and volunteer child protection committees (Karim et al., 2020). New mutual understanding reduced tensions between statutory obligations and cultural autonomy claims.

A multi-country study interviewed child parliamentarians, youth advocates and journalists in India, Uganda and Bolivia regarding impact of media campaigns presenting children's perspectives on issues from healthcare to migration (Dhir et al., 2021). Results associated positive coverage of children's roles and rights with increased political support and broadened positive public attitudes toward policies like prohibition of marriage under 18.

Research in South Africa assessed police officers, social workers and traditional healers before and after sensitivity training addressing misconceptions influencing service provision for orphans, child labor cases and gender-based violence (Moodley & O'Donovan, 2019). Changes in narrative correlated with strengthened coordination and impartiality benefitting integrated policy implementation

METHODOLOGY

Research Philosophy

The research is grounded in a pragmatic philosophy, which emphasizes the importance of both objective and subjective realities in understanding social phenomena. This philosophy supports the use of mixed methods, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the judiciary's role in child rights protection by integrating quantitative data with qualitative insights. By adopting this approach, the research seeks to address the complexities of the judicial system and its interactions with various stakeholders in child protection.

Research Design and Paradigm

A mixed-methods approach was adopted for this study, integrating both quantitative and qualitative research designs. The quantitative aspect involved surveys to gather statistical data on the perceptions of children's rights protection among stakeholders, while the qualitative component included interviews and focus group discussions to capture in-depth perspectives on the judiciary's effectiveness in safeguarding these rights. This combination allows for a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand and helps triangulate findings from different sources.

Study Population

The study population targeted was 200 respondents, comprising various stakeholders involved in the protection of children's rights in Mityana Municipality. This includes members of the judiciary (judges and magistrates), legal practitioners, social workers, child protection officers, educators, and community leaders. Additionally, parents and children (where appropriate) were included to assess their perceptions and experiences regarding the judicial system's role in protecting children's rights.

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Sample Size

The sample size was determined based on the need for statistical validity in quantitative research and the depth of insight required for qualitative research.

Quantitative Sample

A total of 200 respondents were selected for the quantitative survey. This sample size was calculated using a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. The respondents were randomly selected from the study population to ensure representativeness. The survey aimed to gather data on perceptions of the judiciary's effectiveness in protecting children's rights.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

=

Where; n = the required sample size.

N = the known population size

e = the level of significance, which is fixed at = 0.05

$$n = \frac{200}{1 + 200(0.05)^2}$$
$$n = \frac{200}{1 + 200(0.0025)}$$
$$n = \frac{200}{1.5}$$

n=133

Therefore, the sample size was 133 respondents.

Data Collection Instruments

Data collection for this study utilized a combination of structured surveys and semi-structured interviews to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the judiciary's role in protecting children's rights in Mityana Municipality.

Surveys

For the quantitative component, structured surveys were employed. These surveys consisted of closed-ended questions designed to measure stakeholders' perceptions of the effectiveness of the judicial system in safeguarding children's rights. The questions aimed to gather statistical data on various aspects of child rights protection, including awareness of legal provisions, perceived barriers to justice, and the overall effectiveness of judicial interventions. The surveys were distributed to the randomly selected 133 respondents to ensure a representative sample.

Interviews

The qualitative component involved semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders. This method allowed for flexibility in exploring participants' insights and experiences while ensuring that core topics related to the judiciary's effectiveness were covered. The interviews included open-ended questions, facilitating in-depth discussions on the challenges faced in child rights protection and the role of the judiciary. Participants were encouraged to share personal anecdotes and reflections, providing richer qualitative data.

Overall, the combination of surveys and interviews enabled the triangulation of data, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were paramount in this study to ensure the protection of participants' rights and welfare. The following measures were implemented:

Informed Consent

Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. This process involved explaining the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of participation, and the potential risks and benefits. Participants were assured that they had the right to withdraw at any time without any repercussions.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality was maintained throughout the research process. Participants' identities were anonymized to protect their privacy, and data were securely stored to prevent unauthorized access. Only aggregated data was reported to ensure that individual responses could not be traced back to specific respondents.

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Vulnerable Populations

Special care was taken when involving vulnerable populations, particularly children. Parental consent was obtained for minors, and measures were implemented to ensure that interviews with children were conducted in a safe and supportive environment. The research adhered to ethical guidelines established by relevant institutional review boards, focusing on the welfare and rights of all participants.

Data Usage and Reporting

Participants were informed about how the data would be used and reported. Findings would be disseminated in ways that contribute to understanding and improving child rights protection in Mityana Municipality, ensuring that the research serves a greater societal purpose.

FINDINGS

To determine the effect of stakeholder perceptions and engagement on child rights protection in Mityana municipality.

Table 1: Effect of stakeholder perceptions and engagement on child rights protection in Mityana municipality..

Stakeholder perceptions and engagement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Stakeholders in Mityana Municipality understand the importance of child rights protection.	3.1990	1.46636	Fair
Community engagement in child rights issues is active and effective in Mityana Municipality.	3.0597	1.52853	Fair
Parents and guardians feel empowered to advocate for their children's rights.	2.8507	1.56129	Poor
There is adequate collaboration between stakeholders (e.g., NGOs, government, community leaders) on child rights issues.	2.9005	1.54274	Poor
Stakeholder perceptions influence the effectiveness of child rights protection efforts in Mityana Municipality.	3.3184	1.37772	Fair
Public awareness campaigns on child rights are sufficient and impactful in the community.	3.1294	1.42590	Fair
Average mean	3.076283	1.483757	

Source: Primary Data, 2024

The results presented in Table 1 provide insights into stakeholder perceptions and engagement regarding child rights protection in Mityana Municipality. The findings include mean scores and standard deviations for various statements reflecting the effectiveness of stakeholder involvement in this area.

The statement "Stakeholders in Mityana Municipality understand the importance of child rights protection" received a mean score of 3.1990 (SD = 1.46636), indicating a "fair" perception of stakeholders' understanding. This score suggests that while there is a general awareness of child rights issues, the variability in responses reflects differing levels of understanding among stakeholders. Community engagement in child rights issues was assessed with a mean score of 3.0597 (SD = 1.52853), also categorized as "fair." This score implies that while some level of community engagement exists, it may not be as robust or effective as desired, as indicated by the higher standard deviation, which points to a lack of consensus on the effectiveness of community involvement.

The perception that "parents and guardians feel empowered to advocate for their children's rights" received a mean score of 2.8507 (SD = 1.56129), which is categorized as "poor." This low score indicates significant concerns regarding the empowerment of parents and guardians to advocate for their children's rights, suggesting a critical area that requires attention and improvement.

Similarly, the statement regarding adequate collaboration between stakeholders (e.g., NGOs, government, community leaders) on child rights issues received a mean score of 2.9005 (SD = 1.54274), also reflecting a "poor" perception. This result highlights potential gaps in collaboration and suggests that more effective partnerships are needed to address child rights issues comprehensively.

The perception that "stakeholder perceptions influence the effectiveness of child rights protection efforts in Mityana Municipality" garnered a mean score of 3.3184 (SD = 1.37772), indicating a "fair" perception. This suggests that while stakeholders recognize the impact of perceptions on protection efforts, there is still room for enhancing this influence to improve outcomes.

Finally, public awareness campaigns on child rights were evaluated with a mean score of 3.1294 (SD = 1.42590), categorized as "fair." This score implies that while campaigns exist, their sufficiency and impact may not fully resonate with the community, as indicated by the variability in responses.

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The overall average mean score of 3.076283 (SD = 1.483757) reflects a generally cautious view of stakeholder perceptions and engagement related to child rights protection. While there is some recognition of the importance of child rights, significant concerns remain about the empowerment of parents, collaboration among stakeholders, and the effectiveness of community engagement. Therefore, the findings from Table 1 underscore the need for enhanced stakeholder engagement and perceptions regarding child rights protection in Mityana Municipality. The low scores in areas such as parental empowerment and collaboration among stakeholders highlight critical gaps that must be addressed to improve child rights protection efforts. Strengthening community involvement and fostering better partnerships between stakeholders are essential steps toward ensuring the effective protection of children's rights in the municipality.

Relationship between of stakeholder perceptions and engagement and child rights protection in Mityana municipality.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation of stakeholder perceptions and engagement and child rights protection in Mityana municipality..

Correlations			
		Stakeholder perceptions and engagement	Child rights protection
Stakeholder perceptions and engagement	Pearson Correlation	1	.986**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	120	120
Child rights protection	Pearson Correlation	.986**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	120	120

The Pearson correlation analysis presented in the table reveals a remarkably strong relationship between stakeholder perceptions and engagement and child rights protection in Mityana Municipality. The Pearson correlation coefficient for these two variables is 0.986, indicating an exceptionally high degree of positive correlation. This suggests that as stakeholder perceptions and engagement improve, the effectiveness of child rights protection also tends to increase significantly.

The significance level (p-value) for this correlation is 0.000, which is well below the conventional threshold of 0.05. This indicates that the correlation is statistically significant, suggesting that the strong relationship observed is unlikely to have occurred by chance. In essence, there is robust evidence to support the assertion that enhanced stakeholder perceptions and active engagement are closely linked to positive outcomes in child rights protection.

Both variables—stakeholder perceptions and engagement, and child rights protection—were assessed with a sample size of 120 respondents, ensuring that the results are based on a solid dataset. The high correlation coefficient underscores the critical role that stakeholder involvement and perceptions play in fostering an environment conducive to the protection of children's rights within the municipality.

In summary, the Pearson correlation analysis indicates a significant and strong positive relationship between stakeholder perceptions and engagement and child rights protection in Mityana Municipality. This finding emphasizes the necessity for ongoing efforts to enhance stakeholder engagement and perceptions, as these factors are crucial for achieving effective child rights protection and promoting the overall welfare of children in the community.

Regression analysis for Stakeholder perceptions and engagement, and child rights protection

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.986 ^a	.971	.968		.22600	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder perceptions and engagement						
ANOVA ^b						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	346.271	1	346.271	6.7793	.000 ^a
	Residual	10.164	119	.051		
	Total	356.436	120			
a. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder perceptions and engagement						
b. Dependent Variable: Child rights protection						
Coefficients ^a						

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Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.614	.050		12.297	.000
	Stakeholder perceptions and engagement	1.164	.014	.986	82.336	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Child rights protection						

The regression analysis conducted to evaluate the impact of stakeholder perceptions and engagement on child rights protection in Mityana Municipality provides significant insights into the relationship between these variables.

MODEL SUMMARY

The model summary indicates an R value of 0.986, reflecting an exceptionally strong correlation between stakeholder perceptions and engagement and child rights protection. The R-squared value of 0.971 suggests that approximately 97.1% of the variance in child rights protection can be explained by stakeholder perceptions and engagement. This high percentage highlights the critical influence that stakeholder involvement has on child rights outcomes. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.968 further refines this estimate, accounting for the number of predictors, with a standard error of the estimate at 0.22600.

ANOVA RESULTS

The ANOVA table adds context to the significance of the regression model. The regression sum of squares is 346.271, with a mean square of 346.271. The F-statistic of 6.7793, along with a significance value of 0.000, indicates that the regression model is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This result confirms that stakeholder perceptions and engagement have a meaningful impact on child rights protection, validating the overall model fit.

COEFFICIENTS

In the coefficients table, the unstandardized coefficient for the constant is 0.614, representing the expected value of child rights protection when stakeholder perceptions and engagement are at zero. The coefficient for stakeholder perceptions and engagement is 1.164, indicating that for every one-unit increase in stakeholder perceptions and engagement, child rights protection is expected to increase by 1.164 units, holding all else constant. The standardized coefficient (Beta) is 0.986, reinforcing the strength of the relationship. The t-value for stakeholder perceptions and engagement is 82.336, with a significance level of 0.000, confirming that this predictor is statistically significant.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the regression analysis demonstrates a significant and positive effect of stakeholder perceptions and engagement on child rights protection in Mityana Municipality. The exceptionally high explained variance and strong statistical significance underscore the importance of fostering stakeholder involvement and enhancing perceptions to achieve better outcomes in child rights protection efforts. This analysis highlights the necessity for continued engagement and collaboration among stakeholders to effectively safeguard the rights of children within the municipality, ultimately contributing to improved welfare for the community's youth.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study underscore the critical importance of stakeholder perceptions and engagement in the protection of child rights in Mityana Municipality. With a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.986, the data indicate a strong, positive relationship between these two variables, suggesting that as stakeholder engagement improves, so too does the effectiveness of child rights protection initiatives. The regression analysis further supports this conclusion, revealing that approximately 97.1% of the variance in child rights protection can be attributed to stakeholder perceptions and engagement. This high level of explained variance highlights the pivotal role that active and informed stakeholder involvement plays in fostering a supportive environment for children's rights.

However, the results also reveal significant gaps in areas such as parental empowerment and collaboration among stakeholders, which received poor ratings. These deficiencies point to the need for targeted interventions that not only enhance awareness and understanding of child rights among stakeholders but also foster stronger partnerships among NGOs, government entities, and community leaders. Addressing these gaps will be essential to ensure that child rights protection efforts are robust, effective, and truly reflective of the needs and voices of children in Mityana Municipality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Enhance Community Awareness Campaigns: The study recommends that local government and NGOs collaborate to develop and implement comprehensive public awareness campaigns aimed at educating the community about child rights and the importance of stakeholder engagement. These campaigns should be designed to reach diverse audiences, including parents, guardians, and community leaders.

Empower Parents and Guardians: It is recommended that targeted training programs be established to empower parents and guardians in Mityana Municipality to advocate effectively for their children's rights. These programs should focus on building skills in advocacy, legal rights, and available resources for child protection.

Foster Collaboration Among Stakeholders: The study recommends that stakeholders, including NGOs, government bodies, and community leaders, establish formal networks or coalitions that promote regular communication and collaboration on child rights issues. This could include joint meetings, workshops, and shared resources to enhance coordinated efforts.

Conduct Regular Assessments of Stakeholder Engagement: It is recommended that periodic assessments be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement in child rights protection. These assessments should identify strengths and weaknesses in current practices and inform future strategies for improving engagement.

Integrate Child Rights Education into School Curricula: The study recommends that educational authorities incorporate child rights education into school curricula at all levels. This initiative should aim to raise awareness among children about their rights and empower them to speak up against violations, fostering a culture of respect for child rights from an early age.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In conducting research on child rights protection and stakeholder engagement in Mityana Municipality, several ethical considerations were paramount to ensure the integrity of the study and the welfare of participants.

Informed Consent: Participants were fully informed about the purpose of the study, the data collection methods, and their rights as participants. Informed consent was obtained from all adult respondents, and for minors, consent was sought from their parents or guardians. This ensured that all participants voluntarily agreed to partake in the research, understanding the potential risks and benefits involved.

Confidentiality and Anonymity: The study prioritized the confidentiality of all participants. Personal identifiers were removed from data records to ensure anonymity. Participants were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes, minimizing the risk of any potential repercussions.

Protection of Vulnerable Populations: Given that the focus of the study was on children and their rights, special care was taken to protect the interests of this vulnerable population. The research design included safeguards to ensure that children were not exposed to any form of harm or distress during the study. Data collection methods were designed to be age-appropriate and sensitive to the needs of children.

Respect for Cultural Sensitivities: The study was conducted with respect for the cultural norms and values of the Mityana community. Researchers engaged with local leaders and stakeholders to ensure that the research processes were culturally appropriate and aligned with community expectations.

Transparency and Accountability: The research team committed to maintaining transparency throughout the study. Findings were to be shared with participants and stakeholders to promote accountability and encourage community engagement in addressing the identified issues related to child rights protection.

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